



CLUSTER

ASSET PROFILE

Issue Area: Neighborhood /Commercial

The city of Detroit continues to announce new commercial development projects at a record breaking pace. This economic turnaround provides an environment that enhances the potential for successful reinvestment.

Cluster 8 has many assets which support neighborhood commercial development:

- Strongest retail sales in the city (see table 9 next page)
- Predominantly stable, residential areas made up of a diversity of people in established neighborhoods such as Rosedale Park, Evergreen and Redford.
- Subcommunities bounded by arterial streets (Eight Mile Rd., Seven Mile Rd., Six Mile Rd., Grand River and Telegraph) with viable commercial activity.
- Brightmoor community which, according to recent housing and commercial conditions surveys, has several opportunities for commercial investment along Fenkell.

Cluster board members and stakeholders recognized these assets as they formulated neighborhood commercial development recommendations. The neighborhood commercial development recommendations map pinpoints potential reinvestment sites identified by the cluster. (Please refer to page 110.) Specific recommendations propose tying commercial development to new housing in Brightmoor. Board members and stakeholders also discussed:

- policies regarding incentives
- development of business associations
- over concentration of certain types of businesses, such as liquor stores and adult entertainment
- need for stronger relationships between businesses and customers, as well as between active community groups and development entities
- need for development of three areas in the Berg-Lahser community, which includes the southwest corner of Lahser, W. Eight Mile Rd., southwest corner of Lahser and W. Seven Mile Rd, and the northwest corner of Berg and W. Seven Mile Rd.

Very importantly, participants noted the importance of recommendations outlined in the Grandmont Rosedale Investment Strategy Report. The information and recommendations are useful resources for Cluster 8.

Again, site selection becomes key and is usually an essential “first step” of any successful business plan. The location of a prospective commercial business takes into consideration many factors. Besides the important combination of community assets and



business climate, community demographics are key to the selection and, therefore, carefully analyzed. Retail feasibility studies usually include traffic flow and counts. Using traffic data collected and prepared by SEMCOG, the regional planning agency, historical and current cluster conditions were examined against clusterwide traffic patterns and counts. Specific counts can be found under the transportation section. For neighborhood commercial redevelopment planning purposes, the following chart gives a snapshot of the retail areas with high traffic counts and special features.

Table 9. Snapshot of Retail Areas with Highest Traffic Counts

Retail Location/Area	Selected Features
Telegraph (Telegraph and Schoolcraft)	84,000 sq. ft.; oldest retail center in Cluster 8, built in 1956
Grandland (Grand River, Southfield, Fenkell)	98,060 sq. ft.; second oldest retail site in Cluster 8 occupied by Foodland, only African owned supermarket in Detroit
Grand River/Evergreen	New community development shown through current surveys, Rite Aid, Auto Parts USA, Murrays
Grand River/Outer Drive	New Detroit Medical Center Health Center
Telegraph/Six Mile	Mixture of retail and service sites
Telegraph/Seven Mile	Relatively new retail strips anchored by Farmer Jacks east, Arbor Durgs, Blockbuster, Papa Ramanos, etc. west
Telegraph/Grand River	Current community survey shows vacant parcels for sale and potential site for shopping center, Walgreens is pursuing construction of a new 13,900 sq. ft. store at Woodbine St.

***Annual Average Daily Traffic (SEMCOG)**

Overall, it is clear that the western border of Cluster 8 - Telegraph Rd. has the highest traffic flow. The western border of the cluster is also experiencing some commercial activity and growth. The pending Walgreen project increases the number of Walgreen stores under way or planned in Detroit to four. Recently, several communities along Telegraph Road in Wayne county have teamed up to work on business, transportation, and quality-of-life issues on U.S. 24. The city of Detroit has seven of Wayne County's 48 miles of frontage on Telegraph. The group, *Telegraph Tomorrow*, has targeted a \$300,000 operating budget for five goals to: (1) improve Telegraph's overall aesthetic appearance; (2) strengthen Telegraph's economic vitality as a major commercial corridor; (3) make the



road more efficient at moving people; (4) improve neighborhoods; (5) coordinate traffic safety and crime-prevention activities. A similar association monitoring the Eight Mile Rd. corridor has been successful.

A location where traffic count is low (11,046 AADT) appears to support a recently developed shopping center at the 7 Mile Rd. and Evergreen intersection. However, still standing vacant and boarded up on the southwest corner of this intersection is the old Kay n' Kay Tile store. A recent (September 19, 1997) City of Detroit Priority Development Projects report lists this site as a proposed site for a Walgreen Drug store (see Detroit Priority Development Map page 76).

Recent commercial surveys of the cluster show very little, if any, new commercial development in the lower part of the cluster. (See Commercial Building Conditions Map page 75.) Most focus group respondents readily identified Fenkell in the Brightmoor community as having the greatest potential for new commercial development, specifically, the strip between Evergreen and Lahser. Average annual daily traffic (AADT) counts for this strip of Fenkell range from 15,233 at Evergreen to 19,023 at Lahser to Lamphere. Recent condition surveys conducted in the cluster have identified both Fenkell and Schoolcraft as commercial opportunities. (See Commercial Building Conditions Map next page.) Consistent with the plans for this area, the U.S. Postal Service recently broke ground on the first post office to be built in the city of Detroit in 20 years. The \$5-million building, at Fenkell and Braille, will be southeast Michigan's first drive-through post office. Internet information reports that the building will be completed in March 1999. Also in the last few months, two Clark gas stations have been sold at auctions. One location was at 19841 Schoolcraft (16,071 sq. ft. - just east of Evergreen) and the other located at 22000 Fenkell at Lahser (with 10,591 sq. ft.). Another location for new retail, which was identified in the survey, was Lahser at 8 Mile Rd. The location was a former Farmer Jacks with a good parking lot.

Overall, Cluster 8 is a community which has attracted new commercial investment along Grand River which includes a major shopping center, but little else in the other neighborhoods. This stretch of Grand River runs through the Rosedale Park subcommunity which has a median household income of \$43,327. This strip is home to the two finer restaurants in the cluster - Vickie's Steak House and the International House of Pancakes. The only health spa available to the cluster is the Fitness USA located on the border of the cluster at Southfield and Fenkell. Located on the western border of the cluster on Grand River is Don Massey Cadillac - the number one car dealer in 1996 sales (*Crains*, May-June, 1997) in metro Detroit including Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, and Livingston counties. The Cluster is well represented by five of the top ten fast food chains (Domino's, Little Caesars, Hungry Howies, Papa Romanos, A & W) as well as Boston Chicken, Burger King, KFC and Dock's Fish. The Gateway Industrial Park located at Southfield and I-96 is occupied by Technicolor Video which is a major employer in the cluster.